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ABSTRACT

The teaching activities presented in this pamphlet present some ways of helping children acquire a few "mechanisms" to support exploration, growth, and search in language learning and, more specifically, in spelling awareness. The pamphlet begins with a discussion of the context for learning strategies to use in exploring language. Then it tells how to get started by increasing children's exposure to language--as listeners, talkers, readers, and writers--through the use of a rich literature environment and jingles, rhymes, and games. Next, it focuses on exploring language through word play and includes sample activities that allow children to do some of the following things: examine and compare words as whole structures, study changes in structure and the reasons for the changes, use words in differing contexts that perhaps alter meaning, examine meaning relationships in words with changing letter orientation, and discover the functions of vowels and consonants in determining how words can be read or written. The pamphlet concludes by emphasizing the importance of integrating the activities as widely as possible to gain maximum benefit. (EL)

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"Words, words, words, I'm so sick of words!" was the frustrated cry of Eliza Doolittle who, somewhat embattled by the intensive program imposed upon her by Professor Higgins, found no fascination with the words she was rehearsing. Poor Eliza! She was the victim of a procedure which did little to stimulate enthusiasm and, although the outcome was painfully successful, she really didn't ***enjoy*** *the experience.*

Yet those of us who find constant pleasure in the expressiveness of language can appreciate how those words come together to create music, cadence, shape, imagery and nuance. We enjoy the challenge of crosswords and word puzzles of all types, and realise that a knowledge of words, and an ability to play about with them, can not only be fascinating and informative, but also a great deal of fun. ***So it can be with children.***

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WHAT'S IN A WORD?

Some ideas to help with spelling awareness

LEARNING HOW WORDS WORK

In the exciting era of process writing we encourage children to express their thoughts, observations, feelings and ideas in written form from the earliest time, using "invented spellings" and approximations to give them access to a much wider scope of language.

But, as writers develop, there comes a time when they do need to be able to represent words accurately for the reader, with as much independence and confidence as possible. **Why not, then, begin to develop with them an understanding of how words work and how to work THEM effectively?**

This PEN does **NOT** advocate that there be a return to a system of mechanised spelling or recitation of "rules". Rather, it invites teachers to provide opportunities for children to heighten their own perception and strengthen their own understanding by allowing them to explore and make discoveries. In this way, they learn to *formulate, test,* and *evaluate* their *own* hypotheses.

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CONSIDER THESE POINTS

- No exploration of single components should happen until children are *confident users* of language.
- Children should recognise the *purpose* of words and how they function when lodged together in sentences to make meaning in various contexts.
- Children should be allowed to *discover* underlying, systematic patterns and structures and apply these to both reading and writing.
- The isolated memorisation of "basic" banks of words is of little use, as is the treatment of "conventions" of language out of context.
- Children bring a large measure of tacit knowledge and awareness of language to the writing act, as shown in early "invented spellings".
- Prudent intervention can accelerate growth, but not before children have established positive feelings about themselves as language users.
- Print awareness develops through example and multiple experiences, nurtured and encouraged without stress, until teachers realise that the time is right to help pupils expand their knowledge in ways which will enable them to approach language with sufficient analytical and manipulative skill to obviate the need for mechanistic procedures.
- *Effective language teachers must grow in their understanding of language learning, successful language users and how language users grow and develop. From a position of understanding and reflection, teachers can develop classrooms that promote experimentation, growth and search among their students.*

Harste and De Ford

The ideas offered in this P.E.N. are just some simple ways of helping children acquire a few "mechanisms" to support such exploration, growth and search. They certainly represent no teaching *method*. Rather, they are activities which can emerge from spontaneously generated situations, taking their shape and form from the innovativeness of the teacher in response to the expanding perceptions and understandings of the children.

THE CONTEXT

The learning of strategies for exploring language is a quite suitable activity for a *whole class*, when it is done with enthusiasm, purpose — and *fun*. The procedures advocated in this P.E.N. dwell significantly on *play* — that involvement and participation which generates interest and excitement about *discovery*. It will become evident that an awareness of sounds, clusters and word structure becomes and integral part of what is being done but isolated learning of phonics does *not;* nor is prior knowledge of particular sounds necessary. Knowledge is established through repeated presentation of sounds in various orientations within the context of whole language.

To be a confident and accurate speller means having a clear perception of words and the ability to transform them according to the meaning we want them to convey. It means knowing how to play about with them, take them apart and discover ways of putting them together again, to examine, compare and recognise relationships and, ultimately, to formulate hypotheses about what has happened, so we can call upon that knowledge when we need it.

GETTING STARTED

Children's language development depends on their exposure to it — as listeners, talkers, readers and writers. A rich literary environment supports such development, while jingles, rhymes and games offer children enjoyable opportunities to listen, reproduce and act upon words and sounds of language. A little imagination can simply and effectively lift the rhymes from a mere recitation of words to something which provides more involvement and benefit. A small example: using a tone block to establish the rhythm, "Ride-a-cock-horse", with its *galloping* metre, can be utilised fully if, in loose circular formation, half the group gallops in one direction saying or singing the rhyme, while the other group forms an outer ring moving in the opposite direction, chanting an ostinato such as "gallop away, gallop away" in time with the rhythm of the rhyme.

Such speech activities, involving rhythm, action and enjoyment, are extremely important in early learning years — and should find a place throughout the school.

At all levels, children who are involved in a variety of lively, enjoyable, participatory experiences, and are surrounded by examples of written language in every form possible, have many resources available to them to support writing. They have many opportunities to compare spoken and written language and to observe the forms and functions of words in various contexts. If we then exercise flexibility in allowing them to search, find and use what they need, we encourage those twin elements of independence and responsibility.

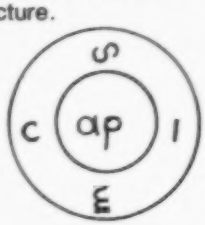
To help children become more aware of the breadth, depth and various forms of language which could be available to them for writing, we need to continue to make fairly substantial contributions. If we are able to communicate our own interest in, and appreciation of, the ways in which words can be used to maximum effect to reflect the purpose and intent of the writer, and are alert to opportune moments which occur throughout the day, words as expressive entities can be highlighted to great advantage.

As we read to our pupils — at whatever level — attention can be focused on descriptive, musical words, onomatopoeic sounds and sequences, and children can develop an appreciation of the skill of authors and poets in expressing all manner of concepts. It is useful to record special words where they can be seen — on the chalkboard, on a mobile — and refer to them occasionally through the day . . . 'Remember that lovely word we discovered this morning?" . . . The visual image and expressive sound of such words become imprinted on children's consciousness and they'll try to use them in both conversation and writing.

Together with language and speech activities, there are the usual games which can be enjoyed with children — and they *should* be games and not paper and pencil exercises. They are, in essence, aural and visual activities which sharpen the eye and ear towards a much clearer perception of sound and form. They are best done using the chalkboard, cards of various dimensions, or games which can involve children in whole-group, small-group or individual activities. While a few early examples are included here, similar activities can be used at any level by increasing the degree of difficulty. They include:

1. **Listening** for words which:
   - — begin with the same sound
   - — end with the same sound
   - — have the same medial sound
   - — begin and end with the same sound, e.g. *dad, mum, bib.*
   - — rhyme
   - — have similarities
   - — are different in a group of words
   - — have a particular sound which recurs in words of a story.
2. Playing **sausage strings** — matching *final* and *initial* sounds:
   bat ten net tip peg
3. Playing **tennis-elbow-foot** — words associated with a particular *concept:*
   fish — line — hook — water — net — boat
4. **Sorting into groups** according to nominated initial, medial or final sounds.
5. Finding a nominated **sound** within words, e.g. **d** in *dot, puddle, landed;* **m** in *mum, coming, camp.*
6. Examining **word shapes** (configuration). Draw shapes and see how many words will fit into each shape. For example:

   big bag boy beg
   dog dip dig day
   lap lip leg
   hop hip hug
   tap tip tag tap
7. Discovering small words in larger words.
8. Determining **missing sounds** within familiar words.
9. Using **spinning wheels** to make words of similar structure.



10. Introducing the concept of simple **crossword** structures.

```
  h       h
b i g     a
  t     t o p
          e
          g u n
```

11. Playing **logic games** — what goes with what?
12. Experimenting with **figure-ground activities** to discover familiar words.

```
c   m   d
  \ | /
b - a - g
  / | \
d   t   n
```

13. Doing simple to more difficult **"Wonder Word" puzzles.**

These are but a very few ideas — teachers will be aware of many more which can be used to highlight the components of words in readiness for wider exploration to develop spelling awareness. For further ideas, see L. Binder Scott, *Learning Time with Language Experiences* and *Communicating* **(Scott Foresman). For ideas for older children, see D. Johnson and D. Pearson,** *Teaching Reading Vocabulary* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston).

EXPLORING

When the time is right — when awareness has been sharpened and interest whetted — then, and only then, can we embark upon the fun of *really* playing about with words. Middle to late Year 1 is often a reasonable time to begin if reading ability is firming, confidence established, and continuous writing has led children to seek a greater understanding about how they could use language effectively. Timing is very important. Only a teacher of a particular group can determine the readiness of children to accept and adopt a closer exploration of structure. (Such exploration is not confined to early learners — it can happen at any level.)

The remainder of this P.E.N. provides a sample collection of ideas to assist teachers in organising activities which will allow children to:

- examine and compare words as whole structures;
- discover recognisable parts of words — clusters/digraphs etc.;
- study changes in structure and determine why;
- take words apart and put them back together;
- use words in differing contexts which perhaps alter meaning;
- discover similarities and differences in form, spelling and meaning;
- examine meaning relationships in words with changing letter orientation;
- discover the functions of vowels and consonants in determining how words can be read or written;
- know how extensions occur for the purposes of describing
  - — tenses;
  - — comparative and superlative meanings;
  - — plurals.

N.B. *At no time is it suggested that the activities form the bases of written exercises. They are described for awareness only in the hope that they may provide a few ideas to stimulate wider exploration. They are* ***discovery activities*** *and should always remain so.*

The type of fun to be enjoyed can happen daily — or whenever the occasion arises. The chalkboard is the only initial aid recommended; a vigorous fifteen or twenty minutes can incorporate a variety of explorations. Chalking and rubbing with some speed and energy keeps children alert and involved. With chalk poised and the aura of expectation keeping attention focused, the "What do you think happens when . . . ?" can generate very enthusiastic response. No doubt teachers would be aware of the concepts being explored, but often only a few of these are committed to isolated written tasks at any given time. Think how much more can be achieved when a number of them are explored in oral situations . . . how much more understanding can be developed.

Rest assured children don't need to have prior knowledge of the words you begin with. They may have stemmed from a particular source or merely presented themselves as useful targets for exploration. Write up a sentence containing an interesting word, read it together, discuss meaning and associations, have the children provide other examples of the word in differing contexts — then lift that word out for closer examination. It is important to incorporate any new discoveries into contexts so that meaning can be attached. Sometimes a newly-developed word can have several meanings; these need to be discussed. Quite a number of words will emerge from children's writing, but we need to spread the net wider to involve words they haven't yet thought of using.

plentiful/plentifully; actual/actually. A pattern emerges which can be discovered and discussed.

20. **Making-a-word activity.** Take two words such as *playground* and *bell* and see how many words could come from these. This can also involve the use of the dictionary to ensure words are legitimate. Children enjoy challenging each other — and themselves. (There is a large group of words which can develop from these two.)

21. **Examining the roles of letter and cluster placements in determing the vowel sound.** It is important that groups of words containing the same clue be presented on the chalkboard so children can discover the pattern and determine the particular vowel sound. For example:

LONG VOWEL SOUND:

(a) *table, sable, title, noble, maple, rifle* (vowel followed by *one* consonant; **le** is long).

(b) *lady, tiny, lazy, baby, bony, wiry* (vowel followed by one consonant; **y** is long).

(c) *meter, rotor, motor, baker, later* (vowel followed by *one* consonant and an **r**- controlled digraph).

SHORT VOWEL SOUND:

(a) *little, battle, paddle, muddle, puddle, kettle* (vowel followed by a *double* consonant; **le** is short).

(b) *jungle, mangle, mingle, rumble, angle, bangle* (vowel followed by a cluster of *two* different consonants; **le** is short).

(c) *munch, pinch, match, width, stitch, patch, lunch* (vowel followed by *one* consonant; consonant digraph — clusters **tch, nch** — is short).

N.B. These, of course, are separate from words containing an established digraph (*marble, gargle* etc.) which simply follow the digraph sound.

22. **Having fun with prefixes and suffixes** — discussing meaning changes and uses.

Prefixes: *a,ab,ad,be,de,dis,en, ex,in,pre,pro,re,sub,un,im.*

Suffixes: *ion,tion,er,y,ly,al,ent, ful,ily,ty,fy,ure,ous,ious,ive,ant, able,ible,an,ian,ic,ance,ence, ness,ment.*

For each and every one there is a great deal of opportunity for discussion and discovery of possible patterning according to association and meaning. There are some loose principles which can be discovered for the alternative uses of *able* and *ible* when words containing these are examined. The particular use of *ic* provides some useful discussion also.

23. **Investigating words which retain basic root meaning** while structure and pronunciation change in differing orientations, e.g. *nation/national; extend/extension; receive/reception; repeat/repetition.* Where meaning relationships can be established, children are in a better position to attach meaning to the extended words in reading and more able to offer a closer representation of structure in writing.

24. **Word-webbing** can be lots of fun too, e.g. *sympathy/sympathetic* — from *path* = feeling. There are quite a few of these which could be explored.

25. **Word-shaping** also can produce some very innovative ideas and at the same time call attention to the components of words which are used to form the shape. Lots of fun. Example: bent

FINALLY

These ideas are by no means exhaustive — they are merely offered as starting points. There will be many more of which teachers will be aware, and are no doubt using. Also, as teachers well know, there will always be exceptions to every pattern, but these provide further opportunities for useful discussion and learning.

It is extremely important to remember that, although activities have been identified separately, they need to be **integrated as widely as possible** to gain maximum benefit. If teachers engage in the "put and take" game mentioned earlier, many of the subsequent ideas can be incorporated into general discussion in various ways and in varying quantities at any one session.

The more awareness which can be stimulated continually, and the more opportunities pupils are given to take strategies discovered and explore further, the better chance they have of identifying the orientation of letters in words to aid spelling and writing, and to recognise the various mutations to enhance reading. There's much that can be learned from frequent examination of the regularities and irregularities of the language.

When working on the chalkboard, mix up the activities — move quickly from one concept to another, extending, reorienting, reordering, transforming, examining, exploring, discussing and discovering how to make language work.

There is no more rewarding feeling than to witness pupils taking new-found strategies and putting them to work with greater understanding and ability. If we constantly ask: "What did we discover about that?" or "What did we decide might happen here?" the pupils will soon be able to respond to the query: "What's in a word?" with the confident . . . "I know!"

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A SAMPLE ACTIVITY

Let's look now at what can be done . . .

Imagine, for example, that in amongst various activities there has been a story about an animal with a *tail*, e.g. a dog, a tiger, a cat. This could be very useful to explore because of the number of reorientations of letters which can be made to create new words and concepts.

After some initial discussion, in which comparisons can be made about the appearance and functions of tails, build on the chalkboard several "stories" which include the word "tail". Read them together. There's no analysis of the word at this stage — just an awareness of what it is from use in context.

Then remove all sentences, leaving just the word **tail** in the centre of the chalkboard. Now use chalk and eraser as briskly as possible, entering and removing (or "putting and taking"), asking with each action: "What do you think happens when I . . . ?"

1. Add **s** to make *tails*, (plurals).
2. Take off **s** and add **ing** to make *tailing*. Discuss meanings and put into contexts, e.g. *tailing lambs*. (Tense: *we're doing it now.*)
3. Remove **ing** and add **ed** to make *tailed*. (Tense: it's already *been* done.)
4. Take off **t** and **ed** and put in **r** to make *rail* (meanings?).
5. Add **s**, *rails* (more than one) and **ing**, *railing* (another terminology).
6. Remove endings and insert **t**, *trail*. How many ways can we use this word?
7. Add extensions **s, ing, ed, er** to make *trails, trailing, trailed, trailer*. Discuss various meanings within a context as they are built.
8. Remove **t, l** and all suffixes and insert final **n** to make *rain*.
9. Add, in turn, **s, ing, ed, y:** *rains, raining* (it's happening now) *rained* (it happened earlier), *rainy* (a descriptive form).
10. Remove endings and insert an initial **t:** *train*. How many meanings?
11. Use **s, ing, ed, er:** *trains, training, trained, trainer*. There's a lot of discussion here about types of training and **trainers**.
12. Erase **all** but **all** and prefix with **s, m, p, b:** *sall, mall, pall, ball*. Again, these can be extended to build up a large body of words to discuss.

Throughout all of this the **al** sound has not been mentioned specifically, but now it can be circled. Discover what it says and feature it somewhere. A collection of such sounds, discovered through exploration, are more meaningful than those introduced in isolation. Here, not only has the **al** been consolidated, but an understanding of the functions of **s, ing, ed, er** has been initiated. Where such activities as these are repeated, using a new word each time, you're not only showing children how they can play about with and reorientate the sounds of language to create many new words with various meanings, but also you've introduced a range of additional activities which children can do independently.

At this stage, use straightforward words which require no alteration to the base structure when extending — words which consist of:

- an initial sound — single consonant/consonant blend/consonant digraph;
- medial digraph — because of the long sound there is no effect on the final sound;
- final single consonant.

Words such as *chirp, leak, beat, peel* etc. are useful starters. One can then look at words such as *hunt, jump, land* etc. Leave words ending in **e** and doublings until later. By playing such quick games as often as possible, children begin looking very closely at how words are formed and how the change of a single letter can alter meaning. In their free time they experiment with all kinds of words, searching out meanings.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

1. Looking at fine differences in words of similar structure, which alter sound and meaning, e.g. *hem/her; cat/car; flower/flowed; bank/band*.
2. Looking for medial letters which change meaning, e.g. *brake/brace; tape/tame; race/rake; time/tire*.
3. **Discovering how e on the end changes sound and meaning.** Make a list of words such as *sit, win, fin, can* and *bit*. Read them all, then take each and add on **e** and ask what happens. Let children listen and deduce that the medial vowel has changed to a longer sound: *site, wine, fine, cane, bite*.

Reverse the order — start with words with **e** on the end and work back to the short word by erasing **e**. A few games like this and children become more aware of these words when they meet them. Now take some words ending in **e** and see how they extend. Write three simple sentences such as: *I smile at you. You're smiling at me. I smiled at you again*. Ask children what happens in each case. Use many more simple examples and encourage discussion.

4. **Discovering root words.** From the earlier game you can now write up words such as *looking, eating, training, playing/playtime, bending* and have children use chalk to circle root words. Find more.
5. **Comparing words to determine when to use *k* and *ck* endings.** Scattered over the chalkboard, write a mixture of words such as: *pack, park, duck, dark, back, seek, lick, trunk, honk, sank, leak, tack, link, drink*. Listen carefully and discuss the sound of each word. Categorise words into groups — there are three distinct structures here. By hearing and observing the orientations of each group, children can discover that:

ck is used after a short vowel — *ack, eck, ick, ock, uck;*
k is used after a long digraph sound — *ark, eak, eek, ork;*
k is used after a short vowel followed by one consonant — *ink, ank, onk, unk*. (Extend and see what happens.)

6. **Making compound words.** Fill the chalkboard with words such as *grand, craft, ship, in, room, bed, set, side, tea, space, coat, hover, mother, over* and have the children decide which of them go together to make a larger word. Join with coloured chalk and discuss others. Then change to using compound words and separate into smaller words.
7. **Looking at words ending in *y*.** Suggest to children that you are thinking of a word (e.g. *happy*) and ask for other words with similar endings. Build a bank of these, e.g. *happy, baby, funny, lady, party, pretty*. By listening carefully, children discover that the final sound says **ee**.

Now offer a word such as *sky* and seek others of similar sound, e.g. *sky, fly, my, sty, dry, try*. Children discover that here the final sound says **ie**.

The next step is to decide what happens when we want to:

(a) make plurals;
(b) change the nature of a verb;
(c) make a comparative or superlative from a word ending in **y**.

Give some examples showing: *skies/tries; happier/happiest; funnier/funniest* and ask if children can decide what has happened. See if there are more examples which can be used to establish that, in certain situations, the **y** changes to **i**. Let it be a generalisation made by the children. Don't forget to examine words such as *try/trying; dry/drying* and seek answers about these.

8. **Studying other forms of change** — those which occur when plurals are required. We can compare:

(a) words which just add **s** and those needing **es**, e.g. *hat, hats; head, heads; dress, dresses; dish, dishes.* (Generally words ending in **ch, sh, ss, zz** need **es**.)
(b) words which change structure and sound, e.g. *foot/feet.*
(c) words which remain the same for both singular and plural, e.g. *sheep, fish.*
(d) words which undergo a change of final letter in plural form, e.g. *calf/calves; leaf/leaves* (**f** becomes **v**).

9. **Looking at tenses which change both form and sound.** Use sentences to illustrate: *You can* **tear** *this paper. I'm* **tearing** *mine. Now we've* _____ *both our papers.* (Use oral cloze.)

Try another example, using *hear/hearing.*

By having children provide the missing word, you can build up comparative examples for them to see. Then think about others: *find/found; bring/brought; grow/grew; stand/stood; see/saw; catch/caught.*

10. **Hunting for words ending with a particular pattern,** e.g. *to***wel**, *tro***wel**, *bar***rel**, *fun***nel**, *quar***rel**. You'll get a variety of similar sounding endings . . . separate them into categories to compare differences. Have children think about and decide to which categories their words might belong. Some valuable discussion can ensue.

11. **Making banks of words with recognisable units,** e.g.
(a) ***all, ask, other, tch***
(b) **be** prefix — ***because, behind, below, before, between, beware, become, became, beneath.***

12. **Discussing, searching and exploring origins of widely used parts of language** such as: *auto-, bio-, photo-, hydro, tele-, -meter, -graph.* There are many of these; they can lead to valuable dictionary searches.

13. Now, let's turn to **extensions where doubling occurs.** Again this needs to be done in comparative form so that children can see and hear differences and form their own generalisations about what happens. Use sentences to illustrate: *It's my turn to* **bat** *next. Tim is* **batting** *now. We can't* **stop** *here. Why are you* **stopping**? Here we discover that where a vowel is short and followed by only one consonant, that consonant doubles when the word is extended.

BUT:

I **train** *every day. I'm* **training** *after school.*
Does your dog **bark** *at night? Mine is* **barking** *at cars.*

Here the medial sound is long, so no doubling occurs. Also illustrate using words such as *bend, drink, think etc.*

Use lots of examples for comparison, also referring back to words ending in **e** to recall what happened there in extension. Categorise and discuss what has been discovered about each group. Also explore such groups as: *butter, spatter, hitter, batter, setter, rubber* (short vowels and double consonants).

14. **Comparing and reasoning why some words appear as they do.** Look at words such as *hop/hopping; hope/hoping* and determine why one has a double **p** and one a single.

- *Hopping* extends from *hop* — with one short vowel followed by one consonant, so doubling occurred.
- *Hoping* extends from *hope* — **e** on the end creating a long vowel and is removed for extending.

15. Having fun with **digraphs and phonograms.** Because there are so many anomalies in the representation of many sounds in the language, interesting sessions can be had by nominating a particular sound, then discovering how many ways this appears in written language. For example, select the **or** sound and seek all the words children can think of. Establish initial categories, then have children use existing knowledge and judgement to determine where they think words would belong. They help each other decide about words to place in groups, e.g.

or *(fork);* **au** *(taut);* **aw** *(paw);* **ough** *(bought);* **ore** *(sore);* **oor** *(poor);* **oar** *(roar);* **augh** *(caught).*

There are so many of these to be explored:

— **al,ay,eigh,eign,ey***(they)*
— **ee,ea,ei**(receive),**ie***(piece),* **ey***(key)*
— **er,ir,ur,ear,or***(work)*
— **ie,igh,ign**
— **air,are***(hare),***ear***(wear)*
— **eer,**(queer),**ear***(near)*
— **oo***(wood),***ou***(would)*
— **oo***(moon),***oe***(shoe)*
— different spellings of the **er** sound as in *park, clerk, grass, hall, laugh, mast.*

Children can't be expected to *remember* all the variations, but if awareness is raised and encouragement given to use the dictionary to check, so much more can be gained.

16. An alternative to the above is to identify **digraphs and phonograms which say more than one sound** e.g. **ough** (about six), **ey** *(they, key);* **ea** *(bead, head);* **or** *(fork, work);* **ow** *(down, flow);* **ou** *(cloud, could);* **oo** *(moon, wood);* **ie** *(pie, piece);* **ear** *(hear, wear, heard);* **oe** *(toe, shoe);* **our** *(flour, four, courtesy);* **augh** *(laugh, caught).*

17. **Exploring homographs, homonyms, homophones.**
(a) homographs; words with the same spelling but different sound and meaning, e.g. *bow, lead, tear, wind.*
(b) homonyms: words with the same spelling and sound but different meaning, e.g. *fawn, crane, pool, pole, cross, lap.*
(c) homophones: words with the same sound but with different spelling and meaning, e.g. *deer/dear; gait/gate; hair/hare; pear/pair; brake/break; sight/site; maid/made; stake/steak* . . . and, of course, *to/two/too.*

A great deal of fun can be had with these and can lead on to some valuable dictionary exploration.

18. **Discover silent letter combinations.** This can be a group activity where each group has a particular silent letter to investigate, finding as many as possible, e.g. **k** before **n**; **g** before **n**; **w** before **r**; **p** before **s**; **h** after **c**; **b** on end (e.g. *numb*).

19. **Finding a pattern for the alternate uses of *I* and *ll*.** Write up some groups of words ending in **l**. Beneath each, discover what happens when the adjective becomes an adverb; e.g. *beautiful/ beautifully; usual/usually;*